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[For a theoretical discussion of the necessity for granting political autonomy to the colonial dependencies of western states and the required changes in administrative practices and economic policy, see cat. 116, pp. 468-512; for discussion of the relationship between the colonies and the colonial powers in the modern world, and the author's proposal for international collaboration in preparing the colonies for eventual independence, see pp. 513-550.]

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PREFACE

121 642 THIS book originated in a request from the Government of Burma at the end of 1942 for my views on reconstruction, with particular reference to features of colonial rule in Netherlands India that might suitably be adopted in Burma. One cannot transplant administrative machinery without reference to the environment; in a new environment it may work better or worse, but it certainly will not work in the same way. It was necessary therefore to emphasize the fact that British and Dutch colonial policy are founded on different traditions. Two basic principles of British colonial policy are the rule of law and economic freedom, whereas Dutch colonial policy has aimed at imposing restraints on economic forces by strengthening personal authority and by conserving the influence of custom.

121 642 182 In modern Burma under British rule there were five notorious evils: the failure of western self-governing institutions; the growth of debt and agrarian distress; the multiplication of litigation and crime; the rise of disaffection and unrest among the Buddhist clergy; and widespread corruption in the judicial and administrative services. I suggested that these can all be traced to a common cause: the disintegration of social life through the inadequacy of law to control the working of anti-social economic forces. Although in other respects Dutch rule is open to criticism which does not apply to Burma, yet in all these matters Netherlands India presents a notable contrast. We would not, even if we could, abandon what is valuable in the traditions of British rule, and in any case we cannot break suddenly with old traditions, or escape the consequences of the past. But the contrast indicates that we ought to incorporate in our policy the principle of controlling economic forces in the interest of social welfare. I tried accordingly to show how, by adapting certain devices of Dutch administrative machinery, this principle might be applied to cure the ills of modern Burma, and to lay the basis of a new and constructive policy.

121 While formulating these proposals it occurred to me that the comparison between Burma and Netherlands India might be of somewhat more general interest. In presenting it to a wider public there was,

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generous comments and criticisms, and also for allowing me to use his unpublished extracts from the records of early British rule in Arakan.

The book was written during the late war, and completed early in 1945. The delay in publication has been due partly to the difficulties of the present time, partly to imperfections in the original script; and in this connection I must gratefully acknowledge the help and patience of the University Press. During the interval there have been great changes but, as the Japanese invasion of the Tropical Far East must certainly mark a turning-point in colonial rule, and subsequent events are still too close to be reviewed in due perspective, it seemed expedient merely to revise the tense in references to the war.

One change however calls for comment. Britain has granted Burma independence. On both parts this may seem bold even to the point of rashness. Some contend that we have been too ready to throw off the responsibilities of Government and Burmans over-ready to assume them. It is a tumbled house that they inherit, and there is urgent need to repair the damage, moral and material, inflicted on Burma in a war during which it was twice invaded. Exports have fallen by two-thirds of the pre-war figure of £37 million. The annual revenue covers only one-third of the current expenditure, and the national debt of over £110 million, about seven times the revenue, is rapidly increasing. Despite the general inexperience of Burmans in modern industry and commerce, their new leaders must enable Burma, so far as national interest allows, to make a due contribution to world welfare by the development of its resources. Moreover, in a country where the tradition of military service has long been suffered to decay, they must train the people to defend their freedom. Now also it will fall on them to deal with problems long-standing and hitherto insoluble: to adapt western institutions to an eastern people, provide remedies for agricultural debt and land alienation, reduce litigation and crime to healthy proportions, restore order among the Buddhist clergy, and purify the administration of corruption. In a troubled world, though less acquainted with affairs than their old rulers, they face a situation far more difficult. In these circumstances it is impossible to contemplate the future without misgivings, and we may well regret that in the past more was not done to equip the people and their leaders for the responsibilities of independence.

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Some advocate Dominion status as an alternative.[1] But, for countries such as Burma, Dominion status is an unmeaning formula. The British Dominions are countries potentially able to stand alone but preferring to be associated on equal terms with the other major partners in the Commonwealth. Burma is not in that position. The racial divisions and sharp conflict of interest and sentiment, which weakened the former Government, would still continue and are incompatible with Dominion status. On the other hand, if the Burman leaders had accepted it, they would have split their party, strengthened their rivals, especially the so-called Communists, and conferred on the prevalent dacoity the halo of patriotism and the semblance of civil war. It is lamentable that we failed to capture the imagination of the people so as to inspire an instinctive loyalty to the British connection, but we cannot escape the consequences of the past. In purporting to grant Dominion status, we would have been promising something that we could not give in return for support that the leaders of the people were unable to command. Once again we would have been committed to the ungrateful task of pacification; more difficult now, and far more costly, than after the wars of 1852 and 1885 when we could employ Indian troops.

I hold then that on both parts the decision in favour of independence was as wise as it was bold, not only in their interest but in ours. Nothing less than independence could transform nationalism from a destructive fever into a creative force. Yet national independence is not a cause or guarantee of welfare. Burmans still need help, and by our long connection we can do most to give the help they need. But we can help them only on terms acceptable to both parties. If we can help Burmans to stand alone securely, we may perhaps look forward to a time when they will welcome a more intimate association. However that may be, we can at least feel that we have done our best to meet whatever difficulties lie ahead by responding boldly to the challenge of a new age.

J. S. FURNIVALL

24 October 1947

[1] [i.e. to unqualified independence—Analyst.]

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Exchange and Market; a capitalist structure, with the business concern as subject, far more typical of Capitalism than one can imagine in the so-called "capitalist lands" which have grown slowly out of the past and are still bound to it by a hundred roots'. He was writing with special reference to the European element, but his remarks apply with equal force to the Chinese element, and to the growing number of natives 'who have adopted a western mentality as their own, and who possess and use those qualities which modern capitalism requires of its representatives'.[1] Dr Boeke and other Dutch economists tend to contrast this rationalist material attitude of western enterprise with the disregard of economic values that they regard as characteristic of the native element. That will need further consideration; here it will suffice to note that during the present century, up to the depression of the thirties, the foreign elements were growing more numerous and more powerful, and that political reforms did nothing to check this process. On these points Netherlands India resembles Burma; what is distinctive of the social order in Netherlands India is that, for good or ill, the native community has largely been cut off from and protected against the working of economic forces, which in other tropical regions, as in Burma, have been allowed free play.

13. Netherlands India and Burma

In the foregoing pages we have tried to bring out some of the more important points of similarity and contrast between Java and Burma. In both there has been rapid progress; both countries have been thrown freely open to the modern world under the policy of the 'open door', and both now make a valuable contribution to the material resources of the world. In both alike the process of development under foreign rule has resulted in a racially mixed community in which economic forces are abnormally active, and in both a nationalist movement voices a reaction against foreign rule.

We have seen, however, that in the principles and machinery of administration a superficial resemblance conceals a profound difference. British rule in Burma rests on the principles of economic freedom and equality before the law, and there is a single uniform system of direct rule in which the administrative officers are essentially servants of the law. Dutch rule in Java rests on the principle of 'like over like', and there is a dual administration

[1] Boeke, cited *Netherlands India*, pp. 452, 457.

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642 in which European and native officials have different functions but are both alike agents of a policy directed towards 'the spontaneous and autonomous promotion of the interests of land and people'.[1] In pursuance of this policy the Dutch have aimed at the conservation of the village and of village customary law, and at the retention of native land in native hands; in Burma, on the contrary, under the rule of law, the policy of Government has been to allow the people to pursue their individual interests within the limits of the law. We have seen that the system adopted in Burma has allowed the emergence of certain notorious abuses; self-government is generally regarded as a failure; agricultural debt has assumed vast proportions and is only one symptom of agrarian distress; there has been a formidable growth in litigation and, what is worse, in serious crime, and this has been accompanied by increasing clerical unrest, while the whole administration is riddled with corruption. It may be useful to examine rather more closely how these matters stand in Java.

Self-government. For many reasons it is difficult to make any fair comparison between Java and Burma in respect of self-government on western lines. In Java the problem of westernized self-government is simplified to some extent by the presence of a much larger and more stable European element, especially in the towns and even in small towns in the interior; in Burma, outside the main ports, and, one may say, outside Rangoon, the European element in the population, if any, is negligible. One would naturally expect self-government on western lines to run more smoothly where Europeans take part in running it. Europeans form a stabilizing element both in the Volksraad and provincial councils, and, moreover, these have not been granted such extensive powers as the corresponding organs in Burma. It is significant that, as soon as the Volksraad was entrusted with a share in the Government under the constitution of 1925, the association parties broke up into their racial elements. 'This is the last Association-Volksraad', said the Chairman in his final speech to the first Volksraad under the new constitution. 'Henceforth each group will pursue its own interests, keenly and without reserve.'[2] The Dutch recognize that 'at least in that still comparatively thin upper stratum of the Indonesian community which is conscious of political and other problems' there is 'a desire for further extension of political rights and suffrage, for formal embodiment in the constitution of

[1] Van Vollenhoven, cited *Netherlands India*, p. 91.
[2] Visman, I, 88.

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642 [liberal] conventional practice, an ambition to obtain greater influence within the Realm on affairs of the Realm as a whole'.[1] In Burma the constitution formally embodies those rights that the Javanese demand, but, because the form has no substance in political realities, it is a source of discontent rather than of satisfaction, and the people make still further demands.

631 As regards self-government in local affairs, urban administration in Java is in many ways a model of efficiency, contrasting very favourably with municipal administration in Burma. But it is largely run by Europeans for Europeans and, in the provision of amenities such as houses for the people, it aims at European standards. The Regency Councils, corresponding roughly to District Councils in Burma, seem to reflect in great measure the personality of the Regent, but one does not hear the charges of gross inefficiency and corruption, ordinarily levied against western institutions of local self-government in Burma.

Western self-government however hardly touches the mass of the people, either in Burma or Java. These live in villages. In Burma western self-government has been constructed, in accordance with western ideas, on the basis of individual rights. The Dutch system was built up on the basis of the village, and aimed to bring the village into organic relation with higher units of popular self-government. But the preponderance of local officials among those elected suggests general indifference, due perhaps to the device of indirect election. Yet in Burma we find a similar indifference, and the lack of any local ties between members and their constituencies has often been deplored; politicians can easily secure votes by appealing to the natural dislike of foreign rule, but they know and care little for their constituencies, and the villagers know and care little about what happens in the legislature.

In Burma as in Java local interest does not extend beyond local affairs, but there is a striking difference between them in village administration. In Java the Dutch have tried to conserve both the form and content of traditional self-government while adapting it to the requirements of the modern world; in Burma a contrary policy has been pursued. In Java the intricate complexity of the native political organization has been simplified, but the regency and village have been retained. In Burma the organic unit, the circle, has been replaced by the purely official township, and the country has been broken up into villages, while there is no organ of oriental

[1] Hart, p. 29.

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Another safeguard against corruption is the Regent. In Burma no one stays long enough in one place to ascertain in what quarters and to what extent corruption may prevail; still less is it possible to work up and carry through proceedings against those who are corrupt. In Java the Regent is permanent. His position and his high pay protect him against the temptation to accept petty bribes, and concern for his own authority and prestige makes him jealous of the influence of corrupt subordinates. These cannot practise corruption long or effectively without attracting the attention of the Regent, who can see that the offender is brought to account. If, then, the administration is so free from corruption as one is told, the credit is probably due in great part to the Regent.

Authority and Law. It must be admitted then that, in all those matters which stand out conspicuously as abuses under British rule in Burma, Dutch rule in Java presents a favourable contrast. Yet there is another side to the picture. The Government has employed 'gentle pressure' to protect the village community against dissolution, and to promote welfare; yet 'gentle pressure' may be debilitating rather than a stimulant, making the patient less able and not more able to stand alone. And it is difficult to reconcile gentle pressure, however well-intentioned, with the principles of liberty and law. In an address to a Dutch audience interested in colonial problems, the present writer endeavoured to illustrate this point.[1]

'One of your subordinate native officers described his work. "I improved sanitation. I got the people to found schools, and build bazaars, and provide a polyclinic. And I would not allow bamboo bazaars; if they could not afford wooden walls, I took care that the posts were of substantial timber and that the roof was sound. I even planted flower gardens, a thing that practically no one else has done; and it was all my own idea, without pressure from above." I have heard your European officers described as social engineers and your native civil servants as welfare officers, and the terms are justified. As I went round your villages and saw the infinite pains you take to conserve village society and build up social welfare, I found myself humming a tune. It was a hymn tune. Gradually the words came back to me: "Can a mother's tender care, Cease towards the child she bare? Yes, she may forgetful be, Yet will I remember thee." I thought of the hours and days we spend on the Bench, listening to advocates (trying to mislead us), laboriously taking down evidence (much of it false evidence), and sending poor unfortunates to jail, and I was filled with envy and admiration of your officers who have the privilege of giving

[1] Furnivall, *Asiatic Review*, 1935, pp. 655 ff.

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• 642 their life to constructive social work as missionaries of western civilization. ...Your Regent can look round his Regency and say, "*si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*" Our energetic township officer reviewing his work would take you to his record room and point to Alps and Himalayas of completed cases; here, he would say, "*si monumentum requiris, circumspice*".

'In your offices of equal standing I found no such mountains of proceedings. There would not have been room for them. I remember visiting a native subordinate. A broad drive through a walled park of several acres took us to a roomy house with a spacious audience hall. In one corner of the park were two outhouses. One was a garage; the smaller one I took to be a bicycle shed. But it was not a bicycle shed; it was his office. I do not wish to guarantee the details of this picture, but it represents correctly the general impression that I gathered everywhere.... Things are changing, but until within the last few years, you had large houses and little offices; in Burma we have large offices and little houses. Your system is, or has been, personal: ours, mechanical....

'(Yet), by a quasi-natural process, by the play of supply and demand, we arrive at very much the same results as you—with very much less work and worry. But the principle is not the same, the method is not the same, and the results are not quite the same. Your policy is, professedly, ethical; ours, practical. These are not mere catchwords. You try to give the people what they ought to want; we are content to give them what they will pay for. Your method is one of personal influence, *zachte dwang, parentah aloes*; we rely on the economic motive, the desire for gain, working within the limits of the law. The results, I admit, are not quite the same. Our villages compare very badly with yours in respect of hygiene and roads; it is hardly an exaggeration to say that, outside the larger towns, until the coming of the motor-car, we had no roads. People do not want disease, and they would rather go dry-foot than through mud. But no one can make money out of hygiene and roads, and not much can be done by a private individual in respect of either. The want for these, and for many other things, is a social want. On the ethical system you aim at organizing social demand; on the practical system we neglect such wants until they threaten to create a public nuisance. Your system works very differently from ours....

'Let me recapitulate the main points of difference. Our officers are magistrates; yours are policemen and welfare officers. Our methods are repressive; yours are preventive. Our procedure is formal and legal; yours, informal and personal. Our civil service is an administrative machine; yours is an instrument of Government. Our aim is negative—to suppress disorder; yours is positive—to maintain order. Order—it is a word we both use frequently, but with a significant difference of context. We talk of "law and order" and you of "*rust en orde*"; but in the absence of a social conscience it is difficult to distinguish between law and the letter of the law, and between *rust* and the placidity of a good baby in its perambulator. The caricature which depicts your system as a *baboe*, a nursemaid,

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and ours as a *babu*, a clerk, does emphasize a difference in vital principle. You try to keep a man from going wrong; we make it unpleasant for him if he does go wrong. You believe in protection and welfare; we believe in law—and liberty.'

Burmans, after so many years of British rule, would probably feel stifled in the hot-house atmosphere of Java, and Javanese would shiver in the bleaker, if not bracing, climate of Burma. But it must be admitted that the version of Dutch policy given above did not pass without protest. Everyone readily admits that the people are too fondly coddled. There have long been general complaints that they are treated as children who will never grow up; that 'a villager cannot scratch his head unless a district officer gives him permission and an expert shows him how to do it'. In a powerful article that met with wide approval, the late Professor Van Vollenhoven pressed home the point that, in exercising 'gentle pressure', officials are not hampered by an obsequious deference to law. But not many would accept the suggestion that their colonial practice encroaches on liberty. Possibly their attitude may be due in part to their heritage of Roman law. 'Its influence', remarks Sir Henry Slesser, 'in stimulating a disciplinary outlook in politics and study on the Continent has been incalculable.' Yet even continental students present a rather similar picture of Dutch practice.[1] Whatever criticisms may be levelled at British colonial policy, and whatever defects may be manifest in practice, both policy and practice are based on the principles of equal law and individual freedom. That is why, in the earlier stages, it is both successful and in many ways congenial to the people; it liberates them from arbitrary oppression by native chieftains or Government officials. And it is probably one reason why, in its later stages, it is found irksome and unpopular; it brings them under bondage to economic law.

Another point which our comparison has brought out is that neither Dutch nor English have solved the problem of enhancing native welfare. The Dutch, by strenuous endeavours, have succeeded in maintaining an astonishingly high level of material welfare, far above the level in those parts of India which are comparable in respect of population, and about the same level as in Burma with much fewer mouths to feed. Yet if the Dutch have protected the people against

[1] Slesser, Sir H., *The Judicial Office* (1943), p. 83; Bousquet, pp. 90ff.; *Netherlands India*, pp. 382, 390.

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CHAPTER VIII

COLONIAL POLICY

1. The Study of Colonial Relations

642 From this brief outline of the course of events in Burma and Netherlands India some facts stand out clearly. Under native rule they both presented typical and not unfavourable examples of tropical society, held together by religion and personal authority in a complex of customary social obligations. Both achieved an elaborate civilization, with many valuable and pleasant features, but their political organization was unstable, and, when challenged by the superior moral and material forces of the modern West, neither was able to preserve its independence. The British in Burma and the Dutch in Java represented the western principle of social order, resting on reason, impersonal law and individual rights, which Europe inherits from Greece, Rome and Palestine. From the beginning of the nineteenth century their policy has been directed towards furthering economic progress and promoting native welfare, but they have employed different methods. The British in Burma adopted the system of direct rule, and the Dutch in Java the system of indirect rule.

In colonial literature the distinction between direct and indirect rule is familiar, and the choice between these systems is sometimes regarded as determined by the national philosophy of rule accepted in the colonial power; it is suggested that indirect rule will be preferred where the goal of policy is to allow the native to attain independence along his own lines, and direct rule where the objective is to find a place for the native in a society of which the principal institutions are European in character. It is true that, so far as colonial administration is directed towards inducing native opinion to accept innovations which it does not actively demand, indirect rule will be favoured by those who prefer genuine acceptance and slow development, and direct rule by those who prefer mere compliance and rapid development. But the theory that the preference for direct or indirect rule depends on colonial policy in respect of native evolution does not cover all the facts. It cannot, for instance, easily be reconciled with the adoption of direct rule in India and the Philippines. Moreover, there is no sharp line between direct and indirect rule, and we find the same

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power adopting different systems in the same place at different times, and in different places at the same time. But the chief defect of the theory is that it does not sufficiently recognize the connection between colonial policy and economic circumstances. Colonial policy is only one aspect of national policy, and national policy is not directed solely by economic considerations. Similarly a man's business is only one aspect of his life, and his life is larger than his business; yet his business will suffer if he does not run it on business lines. Colonial relations are primarily economic and, although pronouncements on colonial policy will be framed in terms congenial to national traditions, colonial practice is conditioned by the economic environment, and it is this, rather than any national philosophy of empire, which determines the choice between direct and indirect rule.[1]

When Europeans started trading in the tropics they had to gain the favour of the local rulers. In order to acquire influence at court the usual plan has been to support the weaker among rival claimants to the throne. If the object of policy be merely to prevent border troubles, he may be allowed a nominal independence, but ordinarily such a subordinate alliance leads gradually and naturally to indirect rule. Indirect rule through a local chieftain is the simplest and cheapest way by which a western power can obtain economic control. So long as its main economic objective is to obtain tropical produce at low rates, the local ruler can do most to help it. Similarly, with development by western enterprise, though large-scale transactions must be regulated on western lines, land and labour can be provided most readily and cheaply by the local ruler, governing his people on traditional lines, and there tends to evolve a dual system of administration, half western, half tropical, with the natives governed on the principle of indirect rule. But where the dependency is chiefly valued as a market for the sale of western goods to natives, and is opened up through native enterprise, with natives growing crops for sale, even native transactions must be regulated in the ordinary way of business according to western law and procedure, and a system of direct rule is indicated. Where, however, any considerable area of the dependency is taken up for European settlement, direct rule must be applied within that area, and may also be extended to the natives.

Few regions are developed solely as markets or solely as sources of tropical produce. A dependency which is originally opened up as

[1] Hailey, *African Survey*, pp. 130ff., 528ff.

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642 a market may acquire importance as a scene of western enterprise, as has happened recently in Burma with the development of oil, tin and other minerals, and rubber. Similarly a dependency, originally valued as a source of tropical produce, will almost certainly, like Java, become important as a market. The economic character of a dependency gradually changes, and so also, and more or less contemporaneously, does the system of rule. Indirect rule is slowly adapted to western requirements, and the western element in the administration becomes more pronounced; or else direct rule on western lines comes to include a popular element. In either case the distinction between direct and indirect rule tends to lose its sharpness.

It is not suggested that the choice between direct and indirect rule is governed solely by economic conditions. Where there is a strong local chieftain, direct rule may be impossible. Where, on the contrary, there is no outstanding local chieftain with authority over a wide area and able to comply with the requirements of the colonial power, direct rule may be unavoidable and is likely to encounter less opposition. In such cases the traditions of rule in the colonial power will carry weight. At the beginning of the present century the Dutch in Java had a long tradition of succcessful indirect rule. On extending active administration to the Outer Provinces they found some tracts where a multiplicity of petty chieftains was an obstacle to indirect rule, but they tried so far as possible to follow their traditional system by creating artificial units. On the other hand, the British had a long tradition of direct rule in India, and there was a tendency at first to adopt this system also in Africa.[1] But in some parts of Africa conditions necessitated indirect rule, and the success of this system encouraged its adoption even where it might at first appear less suitable. (As explained below, in British administration indirect rule is strongly coloured by the older tradition of direct rule.) Apart from such exceptions, economic considerations prevail and, unless the conditions require or justify the more costly and troublesome system of direct rule, one finds indirect rule, with a dual system where western interests require the application of direct rule to certain regions or races.

The connection between economic circumstances and principles of rule gives a special interest to the comparison between Burma and Java. British rule was extended to Burma when the Industrial Revolution was first impelling British manufacturers to seek new markets

[1] *African Survey*, pp. 133, 536.

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in the tropics, and just when Indian administration had been reorganized on a system of direct rule. Naturally this system was extended to the parts of Burma then acquired. At that time, and until the end of the century, western enterprise took no part in exploiting the natural resources of Burma, except, on a comparatively small scale, its teak; Burma was developed as a market, and its progress depended solely on the response of Burman enterprise to the stimulus of economic freedom. This method of development necessitated the introduction of direct rule on western lines, as in India. But the conditions were different in Burma and India. India was protected against the disruptive forces of economic freedom by the institution of caste, and it had long been under, or in touch with, British rule; modern India grew up with modern Europe. Burmans were quite different from Indians in their ideas and ways of life; caste was unknown and their social and economic organization exposed them in an exceptional degree to the impact of economic forces.[1] They knew nothing of the modern world. Yet they were governed from India; no one in India knew anything of Burma, and the local governors were mostly transient officials from India with neither the opportunity, the knowledge or the stimulus to adapt Indian administration and the rule of western law to the requirements of the people. Thus Burma represents in its purest form the process of economic development by native enterprise under a system of direct rule. In Java, on the contrary, the Dutch had nothing to sell, and they valued Java only as a source of tropical produce to be obtained as cheaply as possible. This required indirect rule through native chieftains who could furnish the necessary produce and labour. Java accordingly came to represent the purest type of indirect rule. Up to the end of the nineteenth century native enterprise for export was negligible; but western enterprise developed and with it the need, within the western sphere of the social economy, for direct rule on western lines. This led to a dual system of administration, with the natives under indirect rule, and the Europeans under direct rule. Burma and Java, then, are typical examples respectively of direct and indirect rule.

In both countries the policy of Government has had a two-fold objective: economic progress and native welfare. In both countries economic development has made remarkable, astounding, progress; in both there has evolved a social structure comprising distinct racial

[1] Census, 1911, p. 304.

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642 sections with an elaborate western superstructure over native life; in both native welfare has lagged behind economic progress, and, in both, during the present century, a growing impatience of western rule has found expression in a nationalist movement. These features are characteristic of tropical dependencies in general. Since Burma and Java furnish extreme types of direct and indirect rule, and of development by native and by western enterprise, the comparison between them would seem to furnish a useful starting point for a more general enquiry into colonial policy and practice. Such an enquiry is indeed necessary if we are to understand the problems of either Burma or Java or of any tropical dependency, for it is only against a background of general principles that the phenomena of western rule in any region of the tropics assume their due proportions, and that we can reasonably anticipate finding a satisfactory solution for the many weighty problems of colonial policy and practice. The enquiry may well seem, and is indeed, beyond the competence of any single student, whose intimate acquaintance with practical administration must of necessity be limited. But one conclusion to which the following enquiry points is the need for better knowledge of the facts and better understanding of their implications, and to the urgency of international co-operation in the comparative study of colonial affairs.

2. Survey of Colonial Policy

175 Of late years there has been a growing interest in colonial policy and colonial relations. To this many factors have contributed. Prominent among them are unrest in the tropics, consequent on the rise of modern nationalism, and the jealousy of non-colonial powers. Thus colonial policy has a double aspect, domestic and international. These are interrelated, for, while the advantages accruing to colonial powers from their dependencies arouse envy, and stimulate other powers to assert their claims by force of arms, tropical unrest serves as a pretext and a tool for intervention. The international aspect of colonial relations will require attention in due place, but it is convenient first to discuss the relations between colonial powers and their dependencies.

Discussions of this matter often contrast the high aspirations of modern colonial policy with the selfish exploitation of the past. Thus, according to Lord Hailey, 'the imperialist sentiment which animated much of our public policy in the latter part of the last century led us along paths some of which we should not be inclined to follow

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current practice, but the great scientific achievements come from research in pure science, which revolutionizes practice by attacking old problems along new lines. Similarly the elaboration of welfare machinery can have no appreciable effect on welfare, and still less can it promote autonomy. It will not give them what they want unless they want what it can give, and the promotion of welfare must be approached from a new angle by a revolution in method. The machinery is not only defective, but is applied on a wrong principle.

But, in the modern world, how is it possible for tropical peoples to get what they want? For the environment has changed, and not the people; they still, if left to themselves, would try to reproduce their old environment. But they have been brought into contact with the modern world and cannot get away from it. All the king's horses and all the king's men cannot set the clock back. They can get what they want only if they want what in the conditions of the modern world they *must* want. A fundamental problem of autonomy is to change the people so that they shall come to want, or at least voluntarily to accept, those conditions which the welfare of the modern world requires. Some light should be thrown upon this problem from an examination of attempts already made to introduce self-government among dependent peoples in various projects of colonial autonomy.

9. Autonomy

Colonial autonomy is closely linked with the Liberal tradition, which had two aspects. On the economic side it stood for economic freedom, freedom of person, property and trade; on the political side it stood for freedom of thought, speech and religion. Political freedom was regarded as the natural fruit of economic freedom. In the nineteenth century Liberalism was in the air. British and Dutch colonial statesmen alike claimed Liberal ideals though interpreting them differently; French Liberals recognized their colonial subjects as citizens of France, and Liberalism in Spain, suppressed at home, took refuge in the Spanish territories overseas.

During a great part of the century Liberals in Britain thought colonies a burden, and often cited Turgot's dictum comparing them to fruit that would fall from the parent tree when ripe. Men looked forward to the day when India should be able to stand alone as the proudest day in the story of British rule. Practical administrators like Sir Thomas Munro argued that when Indians were sufficiently enlightened to frame a regular government for themselves, it would

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'probably be best for both countries that the British control over India should be gradually withdrawn'.[1] From that time onwards the vision of self-government in India, though often veiled behind the clouds of more immediate problems, has never wholly been obscured. The attainment of virtual independence by the great dominions furnished a succession of encouraging precedents, and the rise of Nationalism in the East transformed the question of self-government from a vague and remote prospect into a live political issue. Indians came to demand variously self-government, dominion status and independence, and their example has been followed in other dependencies. Britain responded by formally accepting self-government within the empire as the professed goal of its colonial policy.

But, as the prospect of self-government grew less remote, its meaning required clearer definition. Mr Curtis, in his book on *Dyarchy*, remarks that on his visit to India in 1916 'self-government was discussed in official as well as in Indian society, as the one conceivable goal of British policy'.[2] But he found no less than four different interpretations, none of them agreeing with his own. To some British officials it meant no more than the emancipation of the Government of India from the control of Parliament and the Secretary of State, coupled with the devolution of specified powers and revenues to the provincial Governments. To others it meant the repartition of India into native states. To some Indians it implied merely the progressive substitution of Indian for British officials. Others thought that executives in India could be left responsible to the Secretary of State, and yet be rendered dependent for the exercise of their powers on Indian electorates and elected legislatures. His own interpretation was that executives should be 'responsible' to elective legislatures. Still another interpretation of self-government is possible; for there is no necessary connection between self-government and the elective principle, and a dependency, recognizing allegiance to the Crown but otherwise independent, would be self-governing, even if the ruler were an autocrat. Shortly after his visit self-government was identified with responsible government in the pronouncement in Parliament in August 1917, and was more exactly defined in the preamble to the Government of India Act, 1919: 'It is the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration, and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in

[1] Gleig, p. 316. [2] Curtis, p. 357.

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642 British India as an integral part of the Empire.' The same doctrine has since been extended to other dependencies; formerly they were regarded as held on trust, but now they are to be admitted to 'partnership'.

In this formula one may distinguish three separate elements: men, machinery and will; a self-governing personnel, self-governing institutions, and self-determination. These are often regarded as necessary and logical successive stages on the road leading to self-government, and they have in fact marked the political advance of Burma, as of the rest of India. This line of advance, however, would seem to be associated particularly with the system of direct rule. Direct rule signifies the acceptance of western principles of rule, and self-government implies therefore the training of men to apply them, the construction of institutions to work them, and the education of the people to adopt them. The approach to self-government along this line assumes that in tropical society western forms of self-government will, at least in time, come to function in the same manner as in the West. It attempts to adapt tropical society to western principles of government, much as the scientific expert in agriculture or hygiene too often tries to adapt native life to scientific principles.

We have noticed that when the Dutch regained their eastern territories in 1816, they were full of enthusiasm for 'all that is brave and liberal'. Van den Bosch claimed to be applying Liberal principles when he left the Regents and villages, 'the little republics', in Java free to govern their people on their own lines. Indirect rule purports to conserve the self-governing personnel and self-governing institutions that are already in existence and, so far as it is used as an instrument of political advancement, implies the adaptation of western principles of government to tropical society. But most Dutch Liberals of 1816 would have ranked with the more backward British 'Tories'; even the more orthodox Liberals of a later generation, when introducing Liberal reforms on a mid-Victorian pattern, expressly disavowed the idea of governing Java on British principles with a view to political emancipation. Yet circumstances compelled the Netherlands to follow the same path as Britain. The expansion of private enterprise under Liberal rule led to the multiplication of administrative activities, and economy dictated the recruitment of a native personnel. With the growth of the western element in the plural society, administrative efficiency required the introduction of western self-governing institutions in local government. Then,

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during the present century, the convergence of Liberal, Ethical and Nationalist ideas, together with considerations of practical convenience, led in 1918 to the creation of the Volksraad, introducing western institutions in the central government. The new Dutch constitution of 1922 recognized the autonomy of Netherlands India in principle, and, as subsequently formulated in 1942, Dutch policy looked forward to the reconstruction of the kingdom 'on a solid foundation of complete partnership' among all the members.[1] Thus circumstances have dragged the Dutch, for long almost reluctantly, along the track blazed by the British. In Dutch as in British dependencies, colonial policy has sought to make the people capable of self-government by substituting natives for Europeans in the administration and by the construction of western self-governing institutions, and in both alike partnership has come to be recognized as the goal of policy.

10. Personnel

The application of Liberal principles to tropical administration may be dated from the revision of the charter of the East India Company in 1813. Liberal orthodoxy expected Government to confine its activities so far as possible to the maintenance of law and order. On that view it was not illogical to hold that the substitution of Indians for Europeans in the law courts would take India a long way towards self-government. Merely of necessity this process was already making great strides forward. The system of direct rule, inaugurated by Warren Hastings, was completed when Cornwallis took over civil and criminal jurisdiction from native authorities. It soon appeared that the Company could not afford to entertain a sufficient European staff, and Lord Hastings considered various expedients, including the revival of *panchayats*, for dealing with the pressure of business. The easiest and cheapest solution was to train natives as magistrates and judges. They were employed in courts of first instance and, under Lord Amherst, in appellate courts. By 1827 over 90% of the original suits in civil cases were tried by native judicial officers. Thus the employment of Indians was 'rendered imperative by the cost of a purely English administration'. But it was also regarded as 'a great moral duty'.[2] 'With what grace', asked Munro, 'can we talk of our paternal government, if we exclude them from

[1] *Netherlands India*, pp. 82, 84, 109, 160; Broek, J. D. M., *Pacific Affairs*, 1943, p. 338.

[2] Ross, p. 202; Boulger, pp. 60, 64, 67; *IG*, IV, 45.

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native life, ceased to function as soon as the hand of Government was withdrawn. Similarly, in British territories under indirect rule,

> 'the varied responsibilities now placed on native authorities demand the exercise of close and continuous supervision by the administration.... Many observers have questioned whether the traditional native authorities, or at all events a large number of the weaker units, will not be strained beyond their powers by the tasks now laid on them. Everywhere the supervision now exercised over them must bring home to the people that the sanction for their authority is no longer the good will of their own people, but the recognition accorded to them by the administration.'[1]

And under indirect rule, as under direct rule, native social units are continually readjusted and are often amalgamated for the sake of convenience or economy into large artificial administrative units with no traditional sanction, in which administrative methods can be applied according to a standard plan. Under Dutch rule as under British rule, and under direct rule as under indirect rule, local self-government fights a losing battle against efficiency.

12. Machinery: Central Government

In the machinery of the central government in tropical dependencies, one can trace a similar conflict between the contrary ideals of efficiency and autonomy. From very early days both the British and Dutch East India Companies furnished their representatives in the East with the assistance of a council. In British India, under the rule of law during the nineteenth century, this council took on a new character. From 1833 the Council of the Governor-General was gradually enlarged for the purpose of legislation, and in 1861 the Indian Councils Act provided for the addition to the Central Legislative Councils of non-officials, including Indians, and also for the constitution of Provincial Councils on similar lines. But these councils were merely 'committees by means of which the executive Government obtained advice and assistance in their legislation, and the public derived the advantage of publicity at every stage of the law-making process'.[2] Gradually the councils came to exercise an increasing influence over the conduct of affairs, and there was a growing deference to the opinions of important classes. This became more marked when the Indian Councils Act of 1892 enlarged the Provincial Councils and gave partial recognition to

[1] *African Survey*, pp. 538–9; Field, M. J., *Man*, 1943, p. 90.
[2] *ISC*, I, 114–16.

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the elective system. Yet there was no change in the constitutional position of the councils; the object of the Act was that 'each important class shall have the opportunity of making its wishes known in Council through the mouth of some member specially acquainted with them'.[1] The Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 were a further advance in the same direction; they created larger councils with numerous non-officials elected either by local authorities, large landowners, trade associations, or universities. But the authors of these reforms expressly repudiated the suggestion that they would lead 'directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India'.[2] Thus all these successive changes in the form of government were intended to increase its efficiency and not to transfer the responsibility for government from the British Parliament to the Indian people.

On the other hand, however, they went a long way towards local autonomy by strengthening the Provincial Governments against the Central Government, and the Central Government against Whitehall. In all the various councils the predominant influence was that of western industry and commerce. We have noticed that, in Burma, agrarian reforms were pressed on the Provincial Government by the Government of India, and at first not without response. Later, with the enlargement of the Legislative Council, capitalist influence was strong enough to defeat them. In some matters there may be a cleavage of opinion between officials and non-official Europeans, but usually these two classes, from their common origin and upbringing, if for no other reason, tend to adopt the same point of view, and in India from about 1870 onwards, with the growth of western enterprise after the opening of the Suez Canal, there was an increasing tendency towards capitalist autonomy, which became more Indian in colour during the present century, as Indian capital grew more powerful and Nationalism more clamorous and better organized.

Yet, up to the outbreak of the war of 1914–18, the Liberal doctrine of training India for political emancipation had made no impression on the machinery of the Central Government. The Government aimed to promote the welfare of the people, and was amenable to the influence of the Indian public so far as this was vocal. But Nationalists wanted more than influence; they wanted power. The first stirrings of modern Nationalism were directly inherited from the Liberal tradition, but by the end of the nineteenth century it derived most of its strength from a blind reaction, seditious and destructive, against both foreign rule and

[1] *ISC*, 1, 183. [2] *ISC*, 1, 119.

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western civilization. The Japanese victory over Russia inspired new hopes of freedom and a more constructive attitude. Nationalists came to look on western education, western science and western political institutions as instruments by which India might achieve a place among the nations of the modern world. The Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 aimed to appease rather than to satisfy these new demands, and only when Britain, having drawn the sword to defend the liberty of the small nations of Europe, invited help from India, was the doctrine of self-determination extended to the tropics. Indians demanded self-government and, in reply to their demand, the pronouncement of 1917 held up responsible government within the Empire as the goal of British policy. The substitution of responsible government for self-government is significant. Responsible government was intended to imply a Government accountable to the people, and in England therefore had the whole weight of Liberal tradition to back it. In India it appealed both to those Europeans who held that the strength of British rule lay in the well-merited affection of the masses, who would outweigh the disaffected Nationalists, and also to Indians who looked to the Liberal principle of counting heads as ensuring a majority for Indians in the conduct of Indian affairs.

The reforms that followed this pronouncement 'struck at the essentials of the previous system. Authority, instead of being concentrated at the Centre, was to be in large measure devolved on the provinces; the opportunities of the Central Legislature for influencing the Government of India were to be increased; the control of Parliament over the whole of Indian government was to be modified by marking out a portion of the provincial field in which it would be no longer exercised'.[1] This system came to be known as Dyarchy because the British Parliament remained supreme in certain matters, while transferring control over others to Indian ministers, chosen by the people and responsible to a popular electorate. Forms of parliamentary government were devised in the expectation, or the hope, that they would function in the same manner as in England. But conditions in England and India were very different. In England there was a strongly homogeneous society; in all parts of India (and especially in Burma) there was a much divided plural society. In England the franchise has been extended to new classes as they have gained economic power, and voting power, the numerical majority, is a rough measure of economic and military power; in India generally

[1] *ISC*, I, 122.

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(and especially in Burma) the numerical majority lies with that section of the community which has least economic and military power. In England the whole people accept the standards of the modern world; in India only a very small minority lives in the modern world. These conditions, which are general throughout tropical dependencies, are incompatible with parliamentary government in the form which has gradually been worked out in England, and, if attempts be made to introduce western democratic forms, they necessitate the adoption of safeguards to prevent the collapse of government.

In India various safeguards were devised. The executive was empowered to override the legislature, if necessary. Apart from matters expressly transferred to popular control, the executive still remained responsible to the British Parliament. The special representation of particular interests and classes made for a balance of power in the legislatures. The legislatures included an official block, speaking and voting in accordance with the views of the executive. And, possibly the most effective safeguard against unwelcome legislation, the pay and patronage enjoyed by ministers weakened party solidarity among the Nationalist opposition. Responsible government, so far as it makes for better representation, helps Government to know what needs doing, but so far as it involves a system of balance, blocks and bribery, it prevents the Government from doing anything. In India dyarchy failed to gain the approval of the Nationalists, who attributed its shortcomings to the safeguards. But, in fact, it merely brought to light and aggravated the conditions which made India unsuitable to self-government on British lines. The reforms gave new point to Hindu-Moslem competition, and communal tension grew more acute.[1] Similarly in Burma western democratic forms have fostered ill-will and strife between Burmans, Indians, Chinese and Europeans. In Netherlands India likewise the first Volksraad to have an actual share in government was the last 'association-Volksraad', and each racial group began to look to its own interests. Self-government on a popular basis requires the existence of a common social will, but the reforms engendered communal ill-will. In the tropics people in general do not want what the conditions of the modern world necessitate, and self-government consequently does not give them what they want. It does not even give them what they need, for a legislature representing a photographic portrait of a plural society in all its detail of conflicting social and economic interests cannot pass difficult and contentious legislation,

[1] *ISC*, 1, 29.

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and its composition effectually hinders it from doing what is necessary to counterbalance the play of economic forces; social will is paralysed and anti-social forces become more active than before. Thus in a plural society the forms of responsible government not only prevent self-government but make constructive government impossible, and allow greater freedom to economic forces.

It is not only by intensifying sectional and communal differences that the machinery of responsible government tends to hinder progress towards self-government. In India 'while the experienced member of the Services will admit the benefit of British Raj and realize the difficulties in the way of complete self-government; while the member of a minority community, putting the safety of his community first, will stipulate for safeguards; and while the moderate will look askance at extremist methods which he will denounce; all alike are in sympathy with the demand for equal status with the European and proclaim their belief in self-determination for India'.[1] When nationalist aspirations conflict with capitalist activities, Europeans are usually associated with the latter. In India, where Indians own much of the capital, this is not so marked as in Burma and most other dependencies. In Burma, the Indians and Chinese share with Burmans an inferiority complex; they all want equality of status with Europeans. Yet, at every point of divergence between national interest and economic development, the Indians and Chinese tend to line up behind the Europeans, who stand out in the legislature as the protagonists of capital. But the Government is a European government, and the ill-feeling centring on Europeans is focussed on the Government and accordingly on Britain. A dependency cannot obtain self-government peacefully except by co-operation based on mutual good-will between the people aspiring to autonomy and the colonial power attempting to confer it on them, but this is weakened and not strengthened by the introduction of democratic institutions along western lines.

Thus, although Europeans inheriting the Liberal tradition of democratic government will sympathize with democratic aspirations, both general considerations and practical experience suggest that premature experiments in introducing western institutions hinder rather than help towards the attainment of independence, and prejudice rather than promote the growth of popular government and the ultimate achievement of democracy.

[1] *ISC*, I, 408.